

The Megiddo Message

Devoted to the Cause of Christ

THE GARDEN OF EDEN

DID CHRIST DIE ON THE CROSS AS A SUBSTITUTE?

TEMPTATION

LIFE ON THE UPLANDS

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ARE YOU NEUTRAL?

THE HOPE OF THE WORLD

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THE MEGIDDO MESSAGE

DEVOTED TO THE CAUSE OF CHRIST

Percy J. Thatcher, Editor

January 15, 1955

To aid your Bible study

The Megiddo Message—is published for the dissemination of Bible truth alone. It defends and ably demonstrates the infallibility, harmony, and Divine inspiration of the Bible. It enables you to give a reason for your faith, to answer the atheist, and to instruct your children correctly. By answering perplexing religious questions **THE MEGIDDO MESSAGE** will strengthen your faith in the Bible. It will give you courage for these uncertain times and bring peace and stability to your life.

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It is the firm belief of the Megiddo Mission that the second coming of Jesus Christ and the inauguration of His world-wide Kingdom is imminent. The Bible clearly declares that this event will be preceded by the coming of Elijah the Prophet to herald the glorious Day, to gather the saints, and raise the dead to be ready to meet the Lord when He comes.

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THE GARDEN OF EDEN

Was it a literal plot of ground?

THE location of the Garden of Eden is an enigma which has intrigued the minds of students through the ages. It has been a matter of popular belief that Almighty God made a literal garden in which He placed a literal man whom He commanded to till and cultivate the land, to gather out the literal weeds and to grow literal fruits and vegetables.

Men of science have searched in vain throughout the history of the past for any evidence as to the location of such a Garden. And why in vain? First, they did not search in the right place, namely, the Bible, to gain information as to its location and what the Garden of Eden really is. Second, they had no idea of anything higher than a literal garden, and a man and woman placed into it to cultivate the soil and grow literal fruits of the ground. That is the reason they find it difficult to believe the scriptural elucidation of the Garden of Eden.

In place of searching in the Scriptures of Truth for the solution of the Garden of Eden, the majority have lost interest in the story because they consider themselves so enlightened in this 20th century that they cannot read it in the light of modern interpretation. No such thing as a literal Garden of Eden ever existed.

WHAT IS THE GARDEN OF THE LORD?

In searching for the site of a literal garden or vineyard, men have displayed their ignorance of true Bible teachings, for the Lord has told us that the Church, His people, compose the garden.

We are admonished by the Apostle Paul to compare "spiritual things with spiritual" (I. Cor. 2:13) that we may understand the mind of God, as expressed in figures of speech by the Prophets, Jesus, and the Apostles. The first definitions of "Eden" in the original Hebrew are: "delight, pleasure." The original word for "garden" is *gan*, and has for its definitions: "The garden of Eden planted by God. A garden enclosed, Canticles 4:12; figuratively used of a chaste woman—Cant. 4:15; 6:2."

Canticles, often called "Song of Solomon," represents the love of Christ and the Church; and in chapter 4:12, to which the lexicon refers, the reading is as follows: "A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed." And verse 15 reads: "A fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon." Notice particularly that it reads: "figuratively used of a chaste woman." This chaste woman has reference to the bride of Christ, composed of both men and women, all the faithful of the six-thousand-year day of probation. Also we find in Isaiah 58:11 that the faithful are termed "a watered garden."

Like the rest of the first three chapters of Genesis, this expression cannot be understood literally, but it is a part of the beautiful allegory of the Plan of the Almighty Maker. These three chapters have no reference to the literal or physical creation, but to the spiritual creation, the spiritual garden or vineyard of the Lord, in which men and women are being cultivated to become "heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ" (Rom. 8:17).

THE VINEYARD

In searching the Scriptures we find that the vineyard of which Jesus and the Prophets speak is the same as the Garden of Eden. The meaning of the original word for vineyard is given in the lexicon from the Hebrew: "A field set with plants of a nobler quality, specially a vineyard. . . . A vineyard is also sometimes used in the prophets as an image of the people of Israel—Isa. 5:1; Matthew 20:1."

Let us listen to the Prophet Isaiah: "I will sing to my well beloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard. My well beloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill: and he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it . . . and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes. And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard. What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes brought it forth wild grapes."

Was it a literal tower in a literal vineyard? We are told in Proverbs 18:10, "The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe." What is meant by "the name of the Lord"? The answer is found in Rev. 19:13, "his name is called The Word of God." The significance is: when we keep all that the Word of God commands, we are then in the strong tower. "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). The Word of God is the only means of salvation for dying humanity.

Further in Isa. 5:7 we read: "For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plants: and he looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry." What is the vineyard or garden of the Lord? The house of Israel—spiritual Israel—His people, whether Jew or Gentile. What were the plants He was cultivating? "The men of Judah" (Romans 2:28, 29). Was He looking for a literal harvest of grain? No. He looked for judgment and righteousness.

We proved before that instead of there being a literal Garden of Eden, it referred to His people, the bride of Christ; and now we have proved that the vineyard is the same thing and represents God's people. The lexicon cites Matthew 20 to show that Jesus employed the term in the same sense as follows: "For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is a householder, which went out early in the morning, to hire laborers into his vineyard. . . . And he went out about the third hour . . . and said unto them: Go ye into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you. . . . And again about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle. . . . He saith unto them, Go ye into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive. So when the even was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the laborers, and give them their hire."

In the morning of the "day of salvation" (II. Cor. 6:2) for the Adamic race on this planet, the Almighty God began to call laborers into His vineyard or garden—His

Church. That was in Adam's day. There were plenty of people on the earth besides; for Cain had no trouble in finding a wife in the land of Nod. God also called laborers into His garden in the third hour, Noah's day. In the sixth hour, the days of Moses, He was still calling. And in the ninth hour, the days of Jesus, the call was going out and was being confirmed by wonderful signs and miracles. The resurrection of Jesus, confirmed by living witnesses, made a profound impression, and in the Apostolic age multitudes more heeded the call than in any age before or since. Now we are living in the eleventh or last hour of salvation's day and the call is still being sounded to work in the vineyard. At the close of this hour the Lord of the vineyard calls His laborers to account, and pays them according to the fruit they have produced while working in His garden.

In Genesis, where the plan of salvation is represented in the "bud," it is stated that Adam and Eve heard the voice of the Lord in the "cool of the day" calling them to account. It says that Adam was driven out of the garden. This is symbolic in Genesis; the account spans the entire day of salvation. The time has not yet come for the class represented by Adam to be driven out; it is down in the "cool of the day," the evening of salvation's day, that they hear the voice calling them to receive their "wages." That is when this Adam man, those who grew the evil fruits and partook of them, shall be cast out of the garden or vineyard, at the Day of Judgment. This same truth is repeated in Ezekiel, where the unfaithful man, styled "the prince of Tyrus," is cast out of "Eden the garden of God" because iniquity is found in him (28: 1, 2, 13, 15, 16).

WHERE DID GOD GET THIS VINEYARD, THESE PLEASANT PLANTS?

Let us turn to Psalm 80, where we are told He planted a beautiful vineyard for the man to dwell in—the Israel of God, of whom the Almighty One is his strength and power. "Turn again, O God, and cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved." When that wonderful, good time comes, *we shall be saved*. It is the time spoken of in Isa. 35: 4, "Be strong; fear not; behold your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; he will come and save you." It is also thus expressed in chapter 40: 10, "Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him."

Let us read again in Psalm 80, beginning with verse 7, "Turn us again, O God of hosts, and cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved. Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt: thou hast cast out the heathen, and planted it." Moses went down into Egypt and brought out his people Israel from bondage. Thus in all ages the Lord is said to bring His vine or people out of spiritual Egypt, which is used to represent the land of darkness. Whether an Abraham, an Enoch, or a Noah, all come from the land of spiritual darkness and are planted in the vineyard of the Lord, toward the sun's rising—toward the east. There He plants a beautiful garden. Of this "vine" which He brought out of Egypt, He says: "The vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant."

Also of this "vine" it is said: "Thou preparedst room before it, and didst cause it to take deep root, and it filled the land." He is to make this "vine" out of both Jew and Gentile; and His garden shall fill the whole earth. Jesus said in John 15: 1, 2, "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit."

"The hills were covered with the shadow of it, and the boughs were like the goodly cedars." Let us turn to Psalm 104: 16 and see what the Lord will tell us of these "goodly cedars": "The trees of the Lord are full of sap: the cedars of Lebanon, which he hath planted." These are the "trees" in the garden of the Lord, the Garden of Eden. This is the garden we must abide in and bear much fruit.

You remember it tells us in Mark 4 that a sower went forth to sow his seed, and some fell by the wayside, some on the stony ground, some among thorns, and some on good soil. That on the good ground brought forth fruit, some thirty, and some sixty, and some a hundredfold. Jesus, when telling His disciples the meaning of this parable, said that the seed is the Truth, the Word of the Kingdom. It is not literal seed, but the Master bloomed out the parable and said that the seed is the word of the Kingdom; the field is the world of people. The "fowls" that pluck up the seed are not literal fowls: they are false teachers who are teaching the people doctrines which cannot be found in the Bible.

THE HARVEST

We read further in Ps. 80: 11 of this beautiful garden and its trees: "She sent out her boughs unto the sea, and her branches unto the river. . . . Return, we beseech thee, O God of hosts: look down from heaven, and behold, and visit this vine; and the vineyard which thy right hand hath planted, and the branch that thou madest strong for thyself." This grand time will be when Christ returns. As Lord of the harvest, He comes to examine the fruit of the vine. No imperfections nor immaturity will pass unnoticed. If, after we have been planted in the garden of the Lord "a noble vine, wholly a right seed," we turn into "a degenerate plant of a strange vine" (Jer. 2: 23), if our vine produces only "the foul rank growth of malice" and self-importance, instead of the precious fruits of patience, humility and kindness, then we shall most certainly be rejected by the Master. Then, at that Judgment scene, the ax shall be laid at the root of these vines or trees that do not bear good fruit; they shall be "hewn down, and cast into the fire" (Matt. 3: 10). The wheat shall be gathered into the granary; the tares bound in bundles and burned—destroyed. For those who have not borne good fruits "the harvest shall be a heap in the day of grief and of desperate sorrow" (Isa. 17: 11). Then shall be impressed upon the unfaithful the truthfulness of the axiom: As a man soweth, so also shall he reap.

While the harvest is to the unfaithful a time of "desperate sorrow," to the faithful it is the beginning of "everlasting joy." Christ "shall cause them that come of Jacob to take root: Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit" (Isa. 27: 6). "In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely" (Isa. 4: 2). If we are a part of this "garden" we shall be in a beautiful place forevermore.

Then shall Psalm 96: 11—13 be fulfilled: "Let the heavens rejoice, and the earth be glad; let the sea roar, and the fullness thereof. Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein: then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice before the Lord: for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth." These are the people who bear the fruits of righteousness: "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." If we bear these fruits of the spirit now, we shall be permitted to remain in the Garden of God and shall continue to partake of her lovely fruits throughout eternity.

DID CHRIST DIE ON THE CROSS AS A SUBSTITUTE?

A FRIEND writes: "You state that Christ did not do for us what we can do for ourselves; but did not the Apostle Peter say (I. Pet. 2:24) that Christ bore our sins on the tree, meaning that He was a substitute for us on the cross? I wonder what the true meaning really is?"

We can truly say to this friend that the Apostle never thought of such a thing as that Christ was hung on the cross of Calvary as a substitute for sinful man.

Let us begin to read at verse 19 to get the connection: "For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps."

Does this say Christ suffered to pay the debt we owe? to pay the penalty for the sins of all mankind? No. He suffered to leave an example to all who would follow His steps, that they might overcome as He overcame. It says of Him further: "Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth:"—after He had thoroughly learned the law of His Father, He never again made a mistake. "Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously:"—what an example for mortals to follow! what a standard to attain!

By His lifelong obedience to the Heavenly Father, Christ died to sin. But did His obedience in any way substitute for ours? Paul will answer in Romans 6:10, 11, "For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." In no measure did Christ's work lessen ours. We must die to sin as He died.

We are now prepared to read the verse in question: "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree" (I. Pet. 2:24). To understand this text, we must learn what constitutes the "body" of Christ. We learn from Ephesians 1:22, 23 that it has no reference to His literal or physical body, but to the Church, the faithful taken out during this "day of salvation." This verse reads: "And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body." What is His body? It is here stated plainly that it is *the Church*. And in I. Cor. 12:27 is further evidence: "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular."

This verse in First Peter could have been translated much more clearly if the translators had not been drunken on pagan fables. They were deceived by the pagan doctrine of substitution and thought Christ had to atone for the sins of all mankind by death on a literal tree or cross.

In Wilson's *Emphatic Diaglott*, a word for word translation from the original Greek, this verse reads "to the tree," and that is the correct rendering. Notice in the marginal reading, instead of "on" it is given, "or to." To what tree will Christ bear the faithful, His body? Not to the Roman cross, but to the "tree of life." This same word, "tree," is used in Rev. 2:7, where Jesus said: "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life." And again in chapter 22:14, "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." The word has a number of striking definitions, for instance: "Wood, firewood, etc." It also, in one of its cases,

has the idea of "sharp pain, to shave close . . . metaphorically, to scrape off, to get rid of sad old age." This is a wonderful thought: if now we follow in the footsteps of Jesus, get rid of all impurities, become a part of this "body," Christ will bear His body, all the faithful, to the "tree of life" where they shall get rid of "sad old age."

The Greek word *anaphero*, rendered "bear" in Hebrews 9:28, and "bare" in I. Pet. 2:24, has for some of its definitions: "To bring or carry up . . . to carry up to a place of safety, to restore, to recover." If we keep Christ's commandments, follow His example, die to sin as He died, He will bear us to the tree of life where we can eat and live forever; He will bear us to a place of safety. This "tree" has no reference to the cross to which the wicked high priest condemned the Saviour.

What is the tree of life? Wisdom is the tree of life to which Christ will lead His faithful followers. In Proverbs 3:13, 16, 18 we read: "Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding . . . length of days is in her right hand; and in her left hand riches and honor. . . . She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her." In this present state we are given wisdom—if we seek for it—which will enable us to keep the commandments of God; but we are ignorant of the laws by means of which we shall be enabled to live on and on forevermore. A few of earthborn may gain riches and honor in one hand; but they know not how to obtain long life in the other. There are laboratories in various parts of the world today where noted scientists experiment in an endeavor to discover the law that will enable them to perpetuate their existence, but they search in vain. When Christ comes the second time with far greater power than when He raised Lazarus from the tomb, He will lead the faithful to that knowledge of how to perpetuate life.

How foolish to have ever believed that the eating of a literal tree could give eternal life! The way to the tree of life or the knowledge of God is, and always has been, guarded, so that at the coming of Jesus no one can gain that knowledge without first having become pure of heart and clean of hands.

Notice

Abib 1st, the anniversary of our Lord's Nativity, and the Bible New Year, begins the evening of March 24, making March 25 True Christmas and New Year's Day. Let every believer of the God-given Truth prepare to observe the occasion in spirit and manner pleasing to our Lord and coming King. The enthusiasm of the world for the popular but false and pagan date of December 25 must not exceed that of ours who are blessed to know the true date of our Lord's Nativity.

We invite you to enjoy the holy feast days with us at Megiddo Mission. If that be not possible, let the spirit of the occasion permeate your home or at least yourself (according to your ability), till the joyousness of the happy season makes the opening year a memorial of spiritual refreshing.

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T E M P T A T I O N

*"Yield not to temptation, for yielding is sin;
Each vict'ry will help you some other to win;
Fight manfully onward, dark passions subdue,
Look ever to Jesus, He'll carry you through."*

EVERY one is tempted. If a man is alive he is tempted. If he is living on this particular planet, called the earth, he is a tempted man. If he have a body, he will be tempted through it. If there be a mind to think with, there is temptation through that. If there be a social nature through which to enjoy others, if there be a right ambition to take one's place in life, and do his full share of the fighting, and—in a good way—win his share of the victory, there will be temptation because of these.

Some people *yield* to their temptations, I am sorry to say. They calmly lie down, and are trodden underfoot.

Some people *play* with their temptations. Their consciences are not dead yet, though they are a bit withered up from lack of exercise. They make a pretense of fighting, and then having thrown that bone to their consciences to be chewed on a bit, they likewise lie down and are trodden underfoot.

Some people *fight* their temptations. They recognize and resist them. They have learned the meaning of "watch and pray." The "watch" brings into play the human side, the "pray" the divine side. Their watch-tower is never deserted. They have found out the sleeplessness of the tempter and of all his sub-tempters. They lock up the joints of their will, and limber up the joints of their knees, and they fight. They say, "even though we go down, we will go down fighting, and only in the last ditch, and with face outward toward the foe. And when the sword blade snaps we will use the scabbard. But we will never yield by so much as a half hair's breadth." That's the spirit in which they meet and fight their temptation.

To speed up wartime production a certain large motor plant had granted the workmen short recesses for relaxation. Most of the employees spent these intervals in the smoking room. In one of the departments there was an assistant foreman who smoked like all the rest. But a change took place. He became a Christian, and stopped the filthy habit. Hard pressed by his fellow workmen to explain the change, he quietly answered, "One who smokes will have no part in the coming Kingdom. I am determined to be there." They laughed and said, "Wait till things go wrong and he gets keyed up like a high-strung fiddle. He'll smoke; wait and see." Time passed, but not once was he seen with a cigarette.

At last he was encountered by his foreman. "You used to smoke a good deal. Don't you miss it?"

"Yes," he said, very emphatically.

"How do you manage to keep away from it?"

"Well, just this way. It is now ten o'clock, isn't it?"

"Yes."

"Well, today is the twentieth of the month. From seven till eight I asked that the Lord would help. He did. And I put a dot down on the calendar right near the twenty. From eight till nine He kept me, and I put down another dot. From nine to ten He has kept me, and now I give Him the glory as I put down the third dot. Just as I mark these dots I pray, 'O Lord, help me; help me to fight it off for another hour.'"

That's the fighting spirit for temptation. And it makes no difference what the temptation is, it can be fought

and resisted successfully only by steady, stiff fighting.

Now I wish you would mark very keenly this: temptation has no power of itself. It must have help from the man being tempted. There is nothing so weak, so ridiculously weak in itself, as a temptation. It can do nothing, absolutely nothing, without the consent of the man being tempted. It can allure, it can sing bewitching songs, it can make an atmosphere around you mighty hard to breathe in, but it can't get inside a man's life without his consent. And it is as powerless as an infant except as it can get inside.

There is only one knob to the door of a man's life, and that is on the inside. That door never opens except as the man inside opens it. Let every tempted man underscore this fact, that it may stand out sharp and clear. And then he can underscore it sharper yet in the book of his experience that it takes two to make a successful temptation, and you are one of the two. Without your partnership the temptation must slink dejectedly away defeated.

Temptation of itself is utterly powerless. If a man yield, of course he is whipped in the start; he gives the chance of victory away without even a decent show of fight. If a man play with his temptation, as so many do, if he dally and linger, if he hang around the fire poking dry straws in, as so many do, then he is whipped, too. His defeat is sure. He passes the chance of victory out to the assailant without a decent show of fight.

If a man fight, if he is determined to fight, *he will win*. For such a man will reach out for every bit of help within reach. And there is One standing very near by who knows all about temptation, temptations of every sort, who eagerly gives His help. He is always waiting to help.

A man may feel weak and the temptation may seem very subtle and very strong. It may come with the rush of a wild storm down the valley. Or it may come with the sly, sneaking subtlety of a snake crawling along in the tall grass to strike its fangs in when you least think it is there. But the man says, "I want to be right. I want to be good, strongly good. I want to be pure, above all else to be pure." And so he locks up every joint of his will and reaches eagerly out for the help of the Helper at hand, and he fights, and more—he wins. Every temptation so approached and attacked is already defeated.

Every temptation is a chance for a Victory. It is a signal to fly the flag of our Victory. It is a chance to make the tempter know anew that he is defeated. It is an opportunity to strike the note for a ringing song of victory. Steady, steady—there's a will within, and a Friend alongside, and a victory just ahead, with the flag high, and the music joyous.

*"To him that o'ercometh God giveth a crown;
Through faith we shall conquer though often cast
down;
He, who is our Saviour, our strength will renew,
Look ever to Jesus, He'll carry you through."*

"Everything around us and within us is meant to bear a part in our education. There is a perfect Providence in all things and in our relation to all things. . . . We must escape from the limitations which gall our freedom, by outgrowing them, by rising above them. The 'life more abundant' is the only remedy for what we call evil."

LIFE ON THE UPLANDS

AMONG the literary collections of a well-known nineteenth century author is a fable about a wild duck who had been used to the freedom of the air. As the story goes:

On one of his northward migrations he alighted one evening in a farmyard where the tame ducks were being fed. He ate some of their corn and liked it so much that he lingered until the next meal, and the next week, and the next month, until the autumn came and his old companions flew over the farmyard, sending their cries to him that it was time to be up and away. The old ecstasy stirred within him again and he flapped his wings in joyous resolution to soar into the sky. But he got no higher than the eaves of the barn roof, for he had grown fat on the farmer's corn, and the indolent, easy life of the barnyard had taken the zip and soaring power out of him. He resigned himself to remain there and observed in his mind that the place had its good points. Each season thereafter until his death, the calls of his fellows, passing over, roused him, but each year the calls seemed fainter and farther away. The wild duck had become a tame duck.

This allegory applies to all conditions of men. Even when it does not describe a man's career, it describes the ever-present peril which his pathway skirts. Christians, no less than anyone else, are subject to the weakening of their loyalty to the best, to the waning of their devotion, to a slow, insidious substitution of the wisdom which is from below for the wisdom which comes from above.

Consider, for instance, our high calling: to fill the office of kings and priests in the Kingdom of God. Today we may be visited by an enthusiasm for the true, the just, the pure, the excellent, the divine. We may be granted, as it were, an opening into the future day and catch a vision of the glories to come. We become converted to the knowledge of the way man should walk. We may make a compact between ourselves and this knowledge, and feel that henceforth our world is re-created and our lives re-directed. But tomorrow is a different day. The enthusiasm of yesterday has vanished. The warmth has cooled off. The vow is not so binding. Clouds shut out the bright light of the wisdom from above, and we are living on a lower key.

We revert to older and easier habits. We follow the easier course in life. We take on the coloration of the conventional and average life about us. Evils which exist in our environment touch us and we do not hold them off; evils which live within us assert themselves and we do not weed them out. That high intention we intended to honor is not honored, and that task we felt inspired to perform is not done. Promises are broken. The ordinary duties and simple obligations which make up so much of our Christian life are neglected. The fine example we were going to set; the testimony to our faith and hope we intended to make; the act of good will; the neighborly deed; the relief of suffering we resolved; all get lost in the shuffle.

Fears and doubts enter our life. We allow them to grow; we fertilize them with imagination until they become the principal dictators of our actions. An injustice done us, an act of ill-will against us—whether real or fancied—is permitted to make us embittered and fill us with the spirit of vengeance. A peeve develops into a grudge and a grudge into a resolute hate. A discouragement, a disappointment, or frustration, a passing blue

mood is allowed to have its way until gloom and defeatism become the regular tone of our months and years. We forget our high calling, our responsibility and privilege as heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ.

When these things happen, we become, in the terms of the afore-mentioned fable, tame ducks, ordinary barnyard fowl leading a barnyard existence. We have given up the thrill of soaring through the air and the cool, refreshing waters of the forest for the contaminated swamp, the mud and muck of the barnyard. And the longer we remain in this state the fainter and farther away sound the calls to be up and on high.

If it has ever been your lot to live near a busy railroad you no doubt noticed that for the first few weeks you could not sleep nights because of the noise of passing trains, but before long you ceased to notice the noise. That may happen to our spiritual activities. We may become so accustomed to God's call to the uplands that we cease to hear it.

No doubt the duck in our story would gladly have given up the dull and uninteresting life of the farmyard to be able to join his fellows and soar aloft. He could have done it had he controlled his appetite, reduced, and taken sufficient exercise. So, we, when we discover ourselves in the lowlands and our world seems an utter failure, would gladly exchange the gloom of the valley for the glory of the sun-kissed mountain peaks. We would exchange, we say, if we knew how.

In furnishing the true answer to this problem no flowery promises are offered. No rapid moving escalator is recommended to transfer us overnight from the lowlands to the uplands. But here are some of the requirements: self-denial, sweat, blood, tears in the crucifixion of the lower nature. Individuals who reach the uplands will have their portion of these.

First of all, let us remember that genuine spiritual loftiness cannot be experienced when our goals are materialistic. If we seek the things of this world we shall not enjoy the life on the uplands. If we stop to partake of every dainty along the way, the life on the uplands is not for us. But here is counsel, worthy to be tried and proven: By a willing surrender of our lives to the leading of the Master the way upward becomes enjoyable. Whether it be an ancient Galilean fisherman, a modern mechanic, or a merchant, that life starts on the upward path of real progress and spiritual prosperity when it submits to God's directing hand.

Even before we reach the summit our lives will be enriched and more satisfying. New enthusiasms will replace the stale round of meaningless activities which so often characterize our lives. There will be found new nourishment and stimulation for our hungry and empty lives. By taking full advantage of the mental and spiritual breathing space provided on the uplands, we are saved from the narrow outlook of the lowlands.

How dull and irresponsible we are, we who profess a religion whose function it is to set our feet on the uplands, if we do not turn to it wholeheartedly and use the help it has to give.

"Downward the path of life! Oh, no!
Up, up with patient steps we go;
We watch the skies fast brightening there;
We breathe a sweeter, purer air."

PRACTICE

MANY things have been written about the value of practice. Since early childhood we have heard that practice makes perfect. It is easy to see that practice will generally produce improvement, but a little consideration will help us realize that only perfect practice will ever make perfect performance.

People who make a study of such things believe that no amount of effort and practice will ever establish a habit unless that habit gives a satisfaction. Likewise, it is almost impossible to break an undesirable habit unless we practice to establish another habit which will give a satisfaction equal to or greater than the old one.

Enrico Caruso was probably the world's greatest tenor singer. Many people today believe he has never been equalled. Yet as a very young man he was laughed to scorn when he tried out at Scala Opera in Italy. A miserable failure, and very miserable! He persisted in his efforts to improve his singing until at length he came under the guidance of a competent teacher who recognized his ability, and more, his weakness.

It has been claimed that it took eight painstaking years to perfect his upper register. Then within a few short years he became the golden tenor of world renown. As long as he lived he was in constant demand at handsome fees. It took practice, practice, practice, and more, perfect practice, to overcome the faults, failures and ignorance which had kept him commonplace.

The story of Caruso the singer has several points of comparison which are of interest to the working Christian. At the outset Caruso could not be positive he had great talent, while every person who has heard and understood the call to God's service can know he has unusual talent in that he has the ability to make good, otherwise God would not have called him. He has the assurance of John 7:17, "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine."

But ability alone is not enough, for our lives are very short, being, even as James says, "a vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away" (4:14). The best of talent needs a teacher to make acceptable progress. The Word itself is a teacher: "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul" (Ps. 19:7). And Paul, the Apostle to us Gentiles, said that all Scripture given by inspiration of God "... is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (II. Tim. 3:17). This teacher is the gospel, through which "life and immortality" has been brought to light (II. Tim. 1:10). It is the gospel of Jesus Christ. Has any other teacher ever done so great a thing for frail humanity? Indeed the Christian has the perfect teacher.

And God has done more than this. Whenever He has a people He also provides a human guide, someone to take the lead in the way of righteousness, a person to whom the "flock" may look as an example "in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity" (I. Tim. 4:12).

No talent can be used to the full unless its owner has a real desire to use it. And we must have a great and sustained desire to become a citizen of that fair Country where there is no sickness, sorrow, pain or death, and where all is righteousness. The talent has been given to us and we must supply the urgent desire. Caruso had a desire that carried him across eight dreary years of drudging practice, without visible reward. We must have

a desire that will carry us across the remaining years of our life, be they many or few. They will be years of practice which will bring no recognition from the outside world.

Had Caruso accepted failure and turned back, his reward would have been more dreary years in the Italian Army, or the obliterating obscurity of peasant life in an unknown village. Should we cease our effort to use our talent for God we lose the great eternal reward, and shall be "punished with everlasting destruction."

The person who takes up his cross daily, endeavoring to follow in the footsteps of Jesus, striving to become His friend by obeying His commands, is bound to experience repeated and bitter opposition. Otherwise the way would be easy and there would be no cross. But Jesus said there will be a cross to be carried daily, not just for eight years, but as long as probation lasts. This effort is a practice, for we cannot learn in a moment, but must learn as we go, practicing the lessons in character building which we must at last perform perfectly. If we slacken we shall be forced to accept failure, loss, and punishment. This is something we have agreed with God to do, and He will not excuse us.

Can anyone learn to control temper in one practice session? Who can learn to be humble in a single attempt? Can jealousy or pride be conquered without conscientious and continued practice? Can appetite be easily controlled? Is that little member, the tongue, brought under control with a minimum of practice? Practice unending seems to be the Christian's mortal lot. But upon second thought, we should much better say the Christian's privilege!

And if we do not desire the reward more than the pleasures of this life, how shall we perform the practice? Eventually we must practice perfectly to become blameless before Him who suffered, and was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin—after He knew the law. Our opportunity lies within our grasp, and we should be happy for the privilege to seize it.

"Happy are they, and only they,
Who from God's precepts never stray.
Who know what's right, nor only so,
But always practice what they know."

THE PAY ENVELOPE

MOST all of us have, at one time or another, been handed a pay envelope, after we have rendered some service to another. Sometimes this envelope did not contain just what our expectations had been. If we do our work well, arrive on time, and have no time off, we receive a full pay envelope. But if we are sluggish, sleepy, late on arrival, come when we please, then when the pay envelope is given out ours shall be thin and just what we have worked for.

When we receive a full envelope, we rejoice and are happy to know the work was well done and appreciated by the employer. But when the envelope has only a half or even a third of the pay in it, we immediately start to grumble and complain, reasoning that it wasn't our fault the alarm clock didn't go off, we were tired, had a bad day, or had a headache, etc. It is so much better to do the work we are given with all our might and main.

Paul is a wonderful example to us. He has a full pay envelope waiting for him when our Great Judge comes to reckon with His servants. Paul started out by being a zealous Pharisee, who was on his way to Damascus when

he was called into the service of the Lord. From that moment on, nothing could swerve him from his calling. In Romans 8:38, 39 Paul tells us in his own words, "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

From a young child Timothy was brought up by his mother and grandmother to serve the Lord with a loving heart. When Paul came to know him, he loved him as a son. Timothy, too, will receive a full envelope.

With a loving obedient heart, Demas started out with Paul; but soon the ways of the world looked easier and much more to his liking, and he turned from the Lord, forsaking his duty. What pay envelope will he receive? It will be empty.

We, too, shall someday be given a pay envelope. What will ours contain? Will it be full like Paul's? or thin and empty like that of Cain, Judas, Saul and Solomon? Let us bear in mind always, our pay will be just according to our work.

What must we do to receive a full envelope? First, the Lord has given us a choice: we can either serve Him or the world. In Joshua 24:15 it says, "And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve."

Second, we have to learn what God requires of us. In order to do this we must follow the instruction given in Eph. 3:4, "Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ." We also must study to show ourselves approved unto God, workmen that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth (II. Tim. 2:15). After we have learned what God requires of us, then we must do it, we must practice it in our everyday life. This was so important that He sent His angel to His servant John and had this recorded in the last letter ever written to man. "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city" (Rev. 22:14). Also He said, "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein, for the time is at hand" (Rev. 1:3).

If we accomplish this, we can, like our Great Example, say we have finished the work given us to do. We shall then be ready for the reward of immortality which the Lord will give to every faithful servant at His coming. Then it is that Christ "shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself" (Phil. 3:21). This will be our full pay envelope.

WEEK-DAY RELIGION

The religion which merely performs on Sunday, and never gets out of the meeting-house, is about the most useless thing under the sun. It is easy for men to get together, warm into happy feeling, talk of millennium, paradise, and glory-hallelujah; but to go out of church and be just; to defend Christ by a holy life and a chaste conversation; to be strong for principle; to reprove the impudence of money; to stoop down in love to the despised and offcast; to refuse submission to the tyranny and encroachment of mammon—to do these things takes courage, and marrow, and blood. And these are the things which Christ did.

FILL THE MIND WITH SOMETHING USEFUL

YES, let it be something *eternally useful!*

From a temporal standpoint there are a great many things with which one can profitably fill the mind. There is that knowledge which pertains to our vocation or trade. Such knowledge is very worthwhile, but its usefulness is limited. It can gain for us nothing beyond this short mortal span of life, an infinitesimally brief period when compared with the endless ages of eternity in which we are working to live. Then there are those other branches of learning which have afforded enjoyable occupation for the minds of humanity through the centuries: science, history, art, music and literature. But for the person who seeks higher things, such worldly knowledge as represents the noblest of man's achievements is but an inspiration and incentive to press *beyond* to that Day when the fathomless depths of God's infinite wisdom and the beauties and joys of an eternal existence shall be his to share forevermore.

The blessed Bible, that grand Book of all books, should satisfy our every thirst for knowledge and beauty and inspiration. It is an inexhaustible storehouse from which we can draw fresh courage as we pass through this mortal vale. It is a practical Book, meeting the needs of our poor mortal minds, answering with deep sympathy and understanding the soul's longing cry, "What must I do to be saved?"

Here we have a knowledge *eternally useful!* The knowledge which stems from the mind of man is in comparison shallow, trivial, often bigoted, and more often false. The supreme heights of God's wisdom is everywhere manifest in the blessed Volume and is summed up in that text which reads, "Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding."

To fill the mind with contemplations of the pleasures of the day, the joy and sorrow of the moment and such trivialities as, "What shall we eat?" or, "What shall we drink?" or, "Wherewithal shall we be clothed?" is to live the life of a sluggard, spiritually; and all who do this will beg, to no avail, in that blessed Harvest Day, which will be to those who have not wasted away their day of opportunity, the dawn of prosperity.

ANNOUNCING

OUR LATEST PUBLICATION

History of the Megiddo Mission

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The pages of this book unfold the purpose of our organization and the scope of our work, both past and present, for the dissemination of Truth. This edition is revised to include more facts relating to present-day home and missionary activities. Old subscribers who have long cherished an unfulfilled desire to visit the Mission can now "get acquainted" through the medium of the printed page. A comprehensive synopsis of our beliefs is contained in the Appendix.

Price 40 cents postpaid

Meditations on the Word

MEMORY VERSE: Luke 10: 18, "And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven."

A few months ago the writer heard this text quoted in support of the notion that Jesus Christ, in His pre-earthly existence, was an eye-witness of the Miltonian civil war in heaven and the violent expulsion of Lucifer, the leader of the rebellion. The suggestion raises some difficult questions. What was he doing there? How did a devil get into heaven in the first place? Quite simple, was the reply. He was not always a devil, but a bright angel, the heavenly choirmaster, to be exact. He had all the honors an angel could ask for, but he wanted more—to the everlasting sorrow of our planet, where the outcast made a forced landing.

If this be true, then we may conclude that heaven's "screening" process is something less than perfect. And if there is nothing new in the plan of God, then the same sort of thing has been going on in the universe from eternity past and will continue to eternity future, Eternal Wisdom gaining nothing by experience.

So literal an approach involves us in no end of difficulties and absurdities, and is in line with Luther's famous dictum, "I reject reason; I reject mathematical proofs...."

To understand this saying of Jesus, we must first understand whom He is talking about. Who is Satan? It is very certain that he is no angel, and never was, for the angels of God can never die (Luke 20: 36), while Satan, we are assured, is marked for eventual destruction in the "lake of fire, . . . which is the second death" (Rev. 20: 9, 10, 14; 21: 8). If God's glorified heaven is not safe from treason and war and death, then nothing is.

Throughout the Old and New Testaments, Satan, or the devil, is used as a symbolic or inclusive term, to denote sin and all sinners, any adversary to God. It is employed in surprising ways. As godly an individual as the Apostle Peter was rebuked with the words, "Get thee behind me, Satan; thou art an offense unto me" (Matthew 16: 23).

This "Satan" has never been in heaven—God's heaven—nor will he ever be. But in the social and political heavens of our troubled *kosmos*, he rides high and rules with a high hand. He is fittingly termed "that old serpent" (Rev. 20: 2); he is as old as the human race. The Apostle Paul, employing the characteristic Hebrew symbolism, terms the collective powers of evil "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience" (Ephesians 2: 2), which spirit, we are informed by James and by the Master Himself, is nothing but the lusts and evil desires which come out of the human heart or mind (James 1: 13—15; Mark 7: 21—23). Given expression, these lusts are the cause of all the trouble, both political and personal, in the world.

It is definitely certain that Jesus did not refer to some event of His pre-existence, for, in the first place, He did not pre-exist. He was not a God incarnate, but a man, "made of a woman, made under the law" (Gal. 4: 4), and He had no existence before the woman of whom He was made. His Divine paternity did not affect His human nature in any way (Hebrews 2: 17). Secondly, as we have said, Satan, as commonly understood or even as a spiritual prototype, was never in the heaven of the immortals.

Neither could it have been an event of Jesus' own day and age, for His career made no perceptible difference in His own generation. If Satan has fallen from heaven at

any subsequent time, he has certainly made a remarkable come-back, if we may judge by the present condition of society.

So much, then, for the negative side—what our Lord did *not* mean. But what did He mean? The circumstances surrounding the utterance may shed some light on the question. The public ministry of Jesus was at its full tide. The work had outgrown the original band of twelve, so "after these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them . . . into every city and place whither he himself would come" (Luke 10: 1). Miraculous power was provided, sufficient to confirm the Word. To humble men, who had known only the humdrum round of daily existence, this was a new and inspiring experience. The sick were healed, the lepers cleansed, sight restored to the blind, speech to the dumb, hearing to the deaf. Small wonder that they "returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name" (verse 17).

A knowledge of the plan of God and a study of these circumstances convince us that Jesus' reply was not a statement of history but a prophecy. He was a mighty Prophet (Deut. 18: 18), and could see far into the future. To what extent He understood the details of the establishment of His future Kingdom we do not know, but it is quite certain that He knew far more than His closest followers were able to receive. Understanding the broad outlines, they could wait for details until His ascension and the gift of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost. We may therefore conclude that when He said, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven," His disciples understood His meaning perfectly.

Jesus' reply was, in effect, "So far, so good. But this is not the real thing. The power you have experienced is but a foretaste, a faint shadow of that which is to come. When the Son of man returns in His glory and His Kingdom fills the earth, Satan will be challenged not only on the fringes of his domain, but will be cast out of power completely. Rejoice not so much in your present ability, thrilling though it may be, as in the fact that your names are written in heaven (v. 20); that you may be a part of that glorified number of kings and priests who shall bring this same power of God to bear to banish all evil from the earth. This is the greater victory, the supreme goal, of which you must never lose sight."

Satan's fall from heaven will not be to immediate destruction, but into the close confinement of the "bottomless pit" for a thousand years (Rev. 20: 1, 2). Under a stern and unbreakable law, all evil will be repressed and shut up in the hearts of the minority who submit to the new order, but with imperfect motives. No open manifestation of rebellion will be tolerated; the chain is strong. Under such circumstances the human race will learn to mend its ways and to love the better things of life.

At the end of the Millennium comes a final test period, with "Satan" released briefly (Rev. 20: 7, 8), but he never gets back into the heaven he once ruled so arrogantly. The Second Judgment consigns him forever to the second death, utter oblivion.

Satan's fall will truly be "as lightning," not necessarily as a symbol of speed, although forty years (Micah 7: 15, 16) is a very short time in which to dislodge the accumulated evils of some millions of years of human existence. The change will be sudden enough, but like the Second Coming, which is also compared to lightning (Matt. 24: 27), it will come with destructive violence and complete visibility. When Satan falls, it will not be done in a corner, but the whole world shall know.

ITEMS FROM OUR MAIL BAG

We extend a word of commendation to as many as have written in, especially new subscribers, of the firm stand taken through the December holidays. The Lord will bless each one who refuses to lay one grain of incense on the pagan altars.

From our sister at Sayreville, N. J., comes an enthusiastic missive.

"Dear Sister:

"I sharpened my pencil,
And now I must write
A letter to a sister
In behalf of our light.
Adding a thought or two
On the tree of righteousness;
With the hope that it may aid,
In polishing the fruit of goodness.

"Indeed, now is the season to check over our trees and fruit! Are we making use of our provisions, namely the word of God, the most essential growing factor? Are we strong in love, faith, joy, peace, longsuffering, humility, patience, and such like? Check and double check! Is that fruit of the flesh still predominating?

"Our main task of this present season should be that of casting off all the bad fruit from our branches and replacing them with that which is good only. For we know that the fruit of the spirit contains the elements necessary for survival, while fruit of the flesh has the power of corruption. . . . Therefore let us work with all diligence in perfecting our fruit. . . . With Christian love, S. W.—"

A warm note comes from Blacks Harbour, N. B., Can.

"Dear Christian Friends: Greetings in Our Redeemer's name. Enclosed you will find amount for another year's subscription to MEGIDDO MESSAGE if Jesus tarries. Your paper is just like a dear, Christian friend coming into the home for a talk about the good things of God. It has no hard luck story to tell, and I do enjoy it very much. . . .

Sincerely yours in Christ, Mrs. J— E. M—."

The next letter is from a friend in Peterborough, Ont.

"Dear Friends and Brethren: . . . Well, our God sees and knows all things and that is a great help. Nothing is hidden.

"We welcome the voice of the workers and members of the Mission to remind us of the way of life, and we feel safely warned that the day of the Lord is close upon us, and may the Lord find us still watching.

"God has made exceeding great and precious promises to His people and will fulfill every promise to the fullest measure. . . . It is profitable to us to know the truth while living, for God says that the dead know not anything and cannot praise Him in the grave where we go at death.

"One hoping to hear that voice and come forth.

A. B. O—"

Nebraska is represented by this letter from Scottsbluff.

"Thank you for the letter of the month. It is very timely and educational if we but take all things it contains and put them to use.

"It certainly is a hustle and bustle to see these people going back and forth, to and fro, in fulfilling their pagan Saturnalia feast of Dec. 25. It certainly is an opportunity to us to see if we have the will power it takes to shake off these last, worthless leaves. . . .

"Your letter was a real inspiration indeed. I thank you very much for it. Maranatha! Mrs. E. J. S—."

ARE YOU NEUTRAL?

THERE is no such thing as being neutral in the matter under consideration, namely, the warfare between the flesh and the spirit. In the world it is possible for a nation to be neutral while its neighbors are at war; we should always be neutral in quarrels which do not concern us; a judge must be neutral until all the evidence is presented. Other things and persons correspond to the definition, "Neither one thing nor the other; indifferent."

But to us who have entered the lists to contend for eternal life, there is no such middle ground; we are one thing or the other; there is no such thing as being partly right or partly wrong. Jesus laid down the principle in Matt. 12:30, "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad." Also, to state the same fact from another angle, He said in Mark 9:40, "For he that is not against us is on our part." More than a thousand years before these words were spoken, one of God's mouthpieces was requested by the enemy to remain neutral rather than speak distasteful things: "And Balak said unto Balaam, Neither curse them at all, nor bless them at all. But Balaam answered and said . . . Told not I thee, saying, All that the Lord speaketh, that I must do?" (Num. 23:25, 26). What God approves and commands is right, and we must love it, actively and openly. What God condemns and forbids is wrong, and we must hate and abhor it, also actively and openly. There are only the two positions.

To be sure, there may seem to be all shades and grades of human behavior between these two extremes, but as a matter of fact there is no intervening space. The shadow of death extends right up to the border of perfection; not until we have overcome all can we claim any abiding righteousness. "Whosoever shall keep the whole law," said James, "and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." A broken law separates him from God; a span is left out of his bridge across the great gulf, thus making it impossible to gain eternal life. A partial reward will never remove him from the ranks of the unfaithful or spare him from their dismal fate. "If the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!"

Having begun the work by faith in these last days, we must also finish it by faith. When we say, I must wait and see on this or that point, when we postpone anything, even in mind, until Elijah comes to confirm it, we are trying to be neutral—neither one thing nor the other. Nearly a hundred million through the ages have made shipwreck on the rocks of unbelief which are thickly strewn in the channel, and only by letting the Lord guide our vessel in all things, trusting Him though we cannot see, will we come safely into port.

A motor vehicle might have the finest of power plants and equipment, but so long as its transmission stands in neutral it will never get anywhere. Our vehicle has several speeds forward and one reverse. The controls are in our hands. "Choose you this day whom ye will serve." In our case, as we have said, our covenant makes it impossible for us to stay in neutral. We must go forward or backward. We can go into reverse and crash speedily into the pit of destruction; we can go forward in one of the lower speeds and find ourselves disqualified at the end because we were too slow. Only the highest gear with a full flow of power and a steady hand on the wheel, our eye fixed on the highway and the glory ahead, will bring us to the City before the gates are closed at sunset.

THE HOPE OF THE WORLD

Oh, friend, do you stand at the crossroads of life,
Bewildered, dismayed by the envy and strife,
The carnage and lust, by the hate and the greed
Extant in the world? Do you faint at the need
For someone to come, and cause sinning to cease,
And out of the chaos bring order and peace?
If so, then for you is the banner unfurled
That tells of Christ's coming, The Hope of the world.

The hope of the world is established in Right,
And shall not be vested in power and might;
Though He who delivers the world from its chains
Shall make use of both in acquiring His gains.
But when war and tumult are brought to an end,
And peace and good will all our footsteps attend,
Then mercy and love shall distinguish His reign,
Who, born to be King, governs earth's vast domain.

The world is now sick, even nigh unto death,
And no one is able to quicken its breath,
Or fan into flame the few embers of hope;
No soul with earth's troubles is able to cope.
In councils and synods they're seeking to find
A sure panacea for ailing mankind,
Forgetting the promise He left us to cheer:
"Look up, your redemption is now drawing near!"

The hope of the world is the theme of their talk,
But no one points out the right pathway to walk.
Instead, from the pulpit we constantly hear,
"Christ died for your sins; you have nothing to fear."
Christ died on a cross; He died also to sin,
And this is the death that will help us to win
A place in the Kingdom—this then, is our hope,
And we need no longer in ignorance grope.

The hope of the world lies in Jesus' return.
And for this event all His faithful ones yearn;
For when He returns He will banish all crime,
And bring in a reign that is grand and sublime.
So don't be alarmed—things will turn out all right;
The dawning of day will dispel the dark night.
And be not dismayed at the evil darts hurled,
For lo; He is coming, The Hope of the world!

—L. L. S.